

United States Government

Department of Energy  
Bonneville Power Administration

# memorandum

DATE: March 17, 2004

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-137)

TO: Dorothy Welch  
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager, KEWU-4

**Proposed Action:** Duck Valley Habitat Enhancement & Protection SA

**Project No:** 1997-011-00

**Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis**  
**(See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS):** 7.6 Reduce risk of road-related mass failures; 7.7; Reduce risk of road-related surface erosion; 7.8 Drainage control to minimize erosion and sedimentation; 7.9 Avoid construction during inclement weather; 7.14 Ditch and culvert cleaning

**Location:** Duck Valley Indian Reservation, Owyhee County, Idaho and Elko County, Nevada

**Proposed by:** Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Shosone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation

**Description of the Proposed Action:** The Duck Valley Indian Reservation's (DVIR) Habitat Enhancement and Protection Program (HEPP) is an ongoing project designed to enhance and protect critical riparian areas, natural springs, the Owyhee River and its tributaries, and native fish habitat on the DVIR. The HEPP was implemented in 1997 in response to concerns about the impacts of land use practices and policies on fish and wildlife habitat. Project activities were designed to mitigate for these impacts by enhancing and protecting critical riparian areas. The goal of this project is to enhance, create, and restore critical habitats, protect them from grazing impacts, and to monitor and evaluate the effects of these projects. The project provides employment and training for Tribal members, which is very beneficial because the DVIR is an isolated area with high rates of unemployment.

All project activities will occur within the DVIR boundaries, which encompasses approximately 289,820 tribally owned acres equally straddling the Idaho and Nevada border. There are approximately 1,800 enrolled Tribal members. The DVIR is in both the Bruneau and Owyhee subbasins of the Middle Snake Province.

In 2004 and subsequent years, the Tribe will continue to engage in Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities on previously completed projects. A previous SA under the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-54) covered ongoing maintenance of enclosure fencing and watering troughs and so these activities are not included in this SA.

This SA covers maintenance and monitoring of roadwork. Backcountry dirt roads, adjacent to sensitive riparian areas, were previously improved to reduce non-point source pollution. Roads and associated vehicle use can contribute significant amounts of sediments and hydrocarbon pollution to nearby streams and spring water. Unimproved backcountry roads on the DVIR provide access to more than two thirds of the Reservation's acreage. The eastern third of the DVIR rises to a high plateau 3,000 feet above the valley floor, and several roads, such as the Skull Creek and North Fork of Skull Creek roads, follow creeks as they rise to the plateau. Their undeveloped stream crossings, and roads constructed in or adjacent to the stream's floodplain, caused erosion and contributed high sediment loads and hydrocarbon pollution into the streams.

Roads along Skull Creek and the North Fork of Skull Creek were chosen for improvement because they both support pure populations of native redband trout. Before improvement, erosion channels traveled down the roads forming six to twelve-inch ruts, forming small gullies and contributing a high sediment load in the creeks. The creeks had undercut the roads in other places, also causing unnatural sediment loads. The Tribe utilized engineering and bioengineering techniques to mitigate these problems, including installing culverts, native vegetation, geoweb, geo-jute, drainage dips, and bankfull dams as well as redirecting stream flows or relocating road crossings.

**Analysis:** The compliance checklist (National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Checklist for Watershed Management Projects) for this project was completed by Ms. Mattie Allen, Deputy Director of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes' Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department and signed by Mr. Guy Dodson, Sr., Director, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes' Fish, Wildlife and Parks on February 23, 2004. The project meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

There are no Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species in the general vicinity of the proposed project. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offices in both Nevada and Idaho were contacted for information on listed species that could occur in the project area. Letters from the Idaho Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office (dated November 12, 2003) and the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office (dated October 9, 2003) both state that no listed or proposed species or critical habitat are within the project area (attached). There are no anadromous fish species in the project area because downstream dams block fish passage.

A cultural resource review of the proposed project site was completed by the Tribe for the project, prior to implementing the road improvements. This review included a literature search and a field survey by a qualified Tribal cultural resource specialist. As a result of the cultural resource review, no cultural or historic resources were identified in the project area. Because the O&M activities are not expected to disturb any ground, the project will therefore have no effect on cultural or historic resources. If cultural deposits are found during any phase of the proposed project, if the nature of the undertaking changes, a cultural resource specialist will be contacted immediately.

Standard protection measures for activities in or near streams and wetlands will be followed during the implementation of the project. It is expected that no permit approvals will be needed for this

work. If the work should change, no work will be authorized to begin until the applicant has obtained all required permits and approvals.

Public involvement has taken place as part of the HEPP. The project will be implemented on Tribal land and will be implemented by the Tribe. Partners include the Tribal Environmental Protection Program, the Tribal engineer and Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Coordinator, and the BIA Roads Department. Public involvement has also taken place through general informational sources including public meetings, newspaper articles, and local workshops.

**Findings:** The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Watershed Management Program that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Watershed Management Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

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Kimberly R. St.Hilaire  
Environmental Protection Specialist

CONCUR:

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Thomas C. McKinney  
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attachments:**

NEPA Compliance Checklist for Watershed Management Projects

USFWS Species Letter, Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office, October 9, 2003

USFWS Species Letter, Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office, November 12, 2003

cc: (w/ attachments)

Ms. Mattie Allen, Deputy Director, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes' Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department

Mr. Guy Dodson, Sr., Director, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes' Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department

bcc: (w/o attachments)

L. Croff - KEC-4

N. Weintraub - KEC-4

K. St.Hilaire – KEC-4

P. Key - LC-7

H. Adams – LC-7

bcc: (w/ attachments)

Official File - KEC (EQ-14)

KRSt.Hilaire:krs:5361:3/17/04

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